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## Mineland, The Endless War: A Photo Essay

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A PHOTO ESSAY BY ROCCO RORANDELLI

# MINELAND

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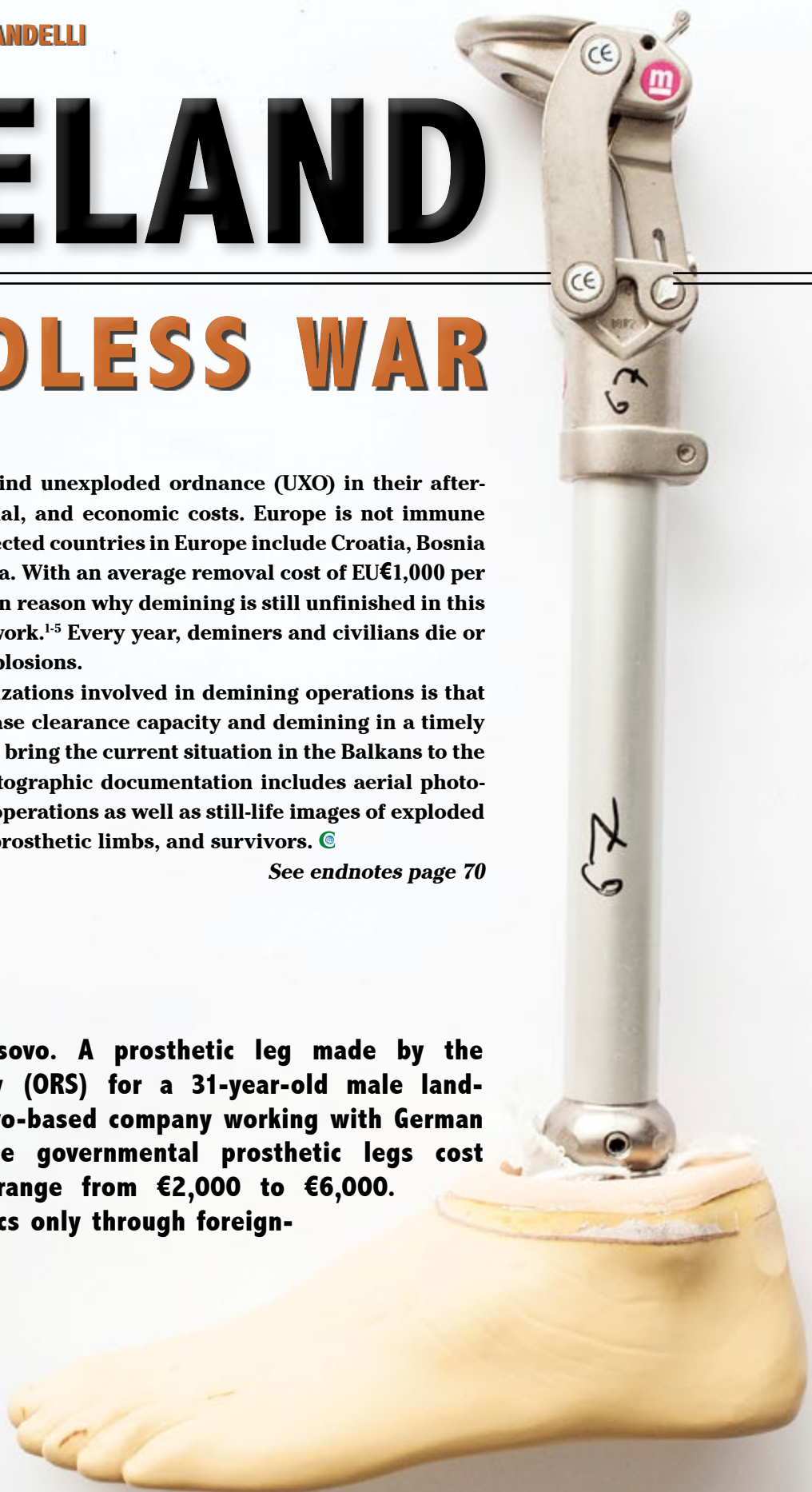
## THE ENDLESS WAR

Many modern conflicts leave behind unexploded ordnance (UXO) in their aftermath, inflicting severe human, social, and economic costs. Europe is not immune from this issue. Today, landmine-affected countries in Europe include Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and Serbia. With an average removal cost of EU€1,000 per mine, insufficient funding is the main reason why demining is still unfinished in this region after more than 20 years of work.<sup>1-5</sup> Every year, deminers and civilians die or are injured because of ordnance explosions.

A common sentiment of all organizations involved in demining operations is that greater funds are required to increase clearance capacity and demining in a timely manner. The goal of this project is to bring the current situation in the Balkans to the public attention. The following photographic documentation includes aerial photographs of minefields and demining operations as well as still-life images of exploded ordnance, tools used by deminers, prosthetic limbs, and survivors. ©

*See endnotes page 70*

**19 April 2016. Pristina, Kosovo. A prosthetic leg made by the Orthopaedic Research Society (ORS) for a 31-year-old male landmine survivor. ORS is a Kosovo-based company working with German manufacturer Ottobock. While governmental prosthetic legs cost about €500, ORS products range from €2,000 to €6,000. Survivors can afford prosthetics only through foreign-sponsored grants.**



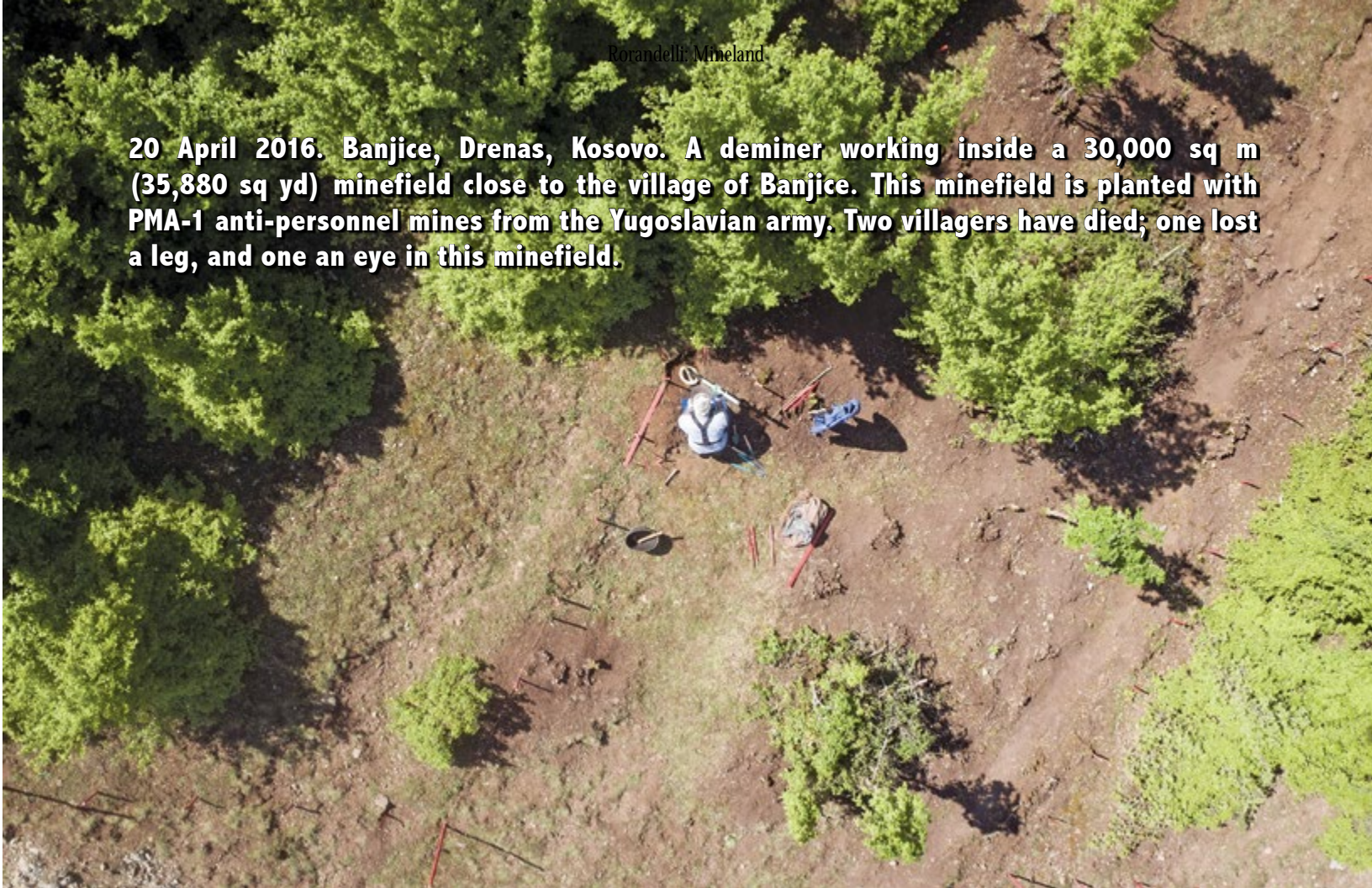


**22 April 2017. Assia, 76, by her home in the hills above Sarajevo. She stepped on an anti-tank mine, probably activated by an anti-personnel mine. In the explosion, she lost her legs, an arm, and severely injured her back. Doctors say that it is a miracle she survived. "After the explosion, there was a crater where we could have parked a car," says her son, who today takes care of Assia.**





**20 April 2016. Banjice, Drenas, Kosovo. A deminer working inside a 30,000 sq m (35,880 sq yd) minefield close to the village of Banjice. This minefield is planted with PMA-1 anti-personnel mines from the Yugoslavian army. Two villagers have died; one lost a leg, and one an eye in this minefield.**



**20 April 2016. Doganaj, Kosovo. Deminers work in a 100,000 sq m (119,599 sq yd) minefield located along a main road in Doganaj, contaminated by NATO BLU-97 cluster bombs.**





**23 April 2017. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Alija Svraka, born in 1960, is president of the association for invalids, with 120 members in Sarajevo, 50 percent of which are due to mines. While a soldier, he lost his legs in 1994 in Nišici while walking, sixth in line, in a column through a meadow.**





**10 July 2016. Kotur, Sisak, Croatia. A path separating a demined portion of the forest (top) and the contaminated portion of the forest that remains to be cleared (bottom).**

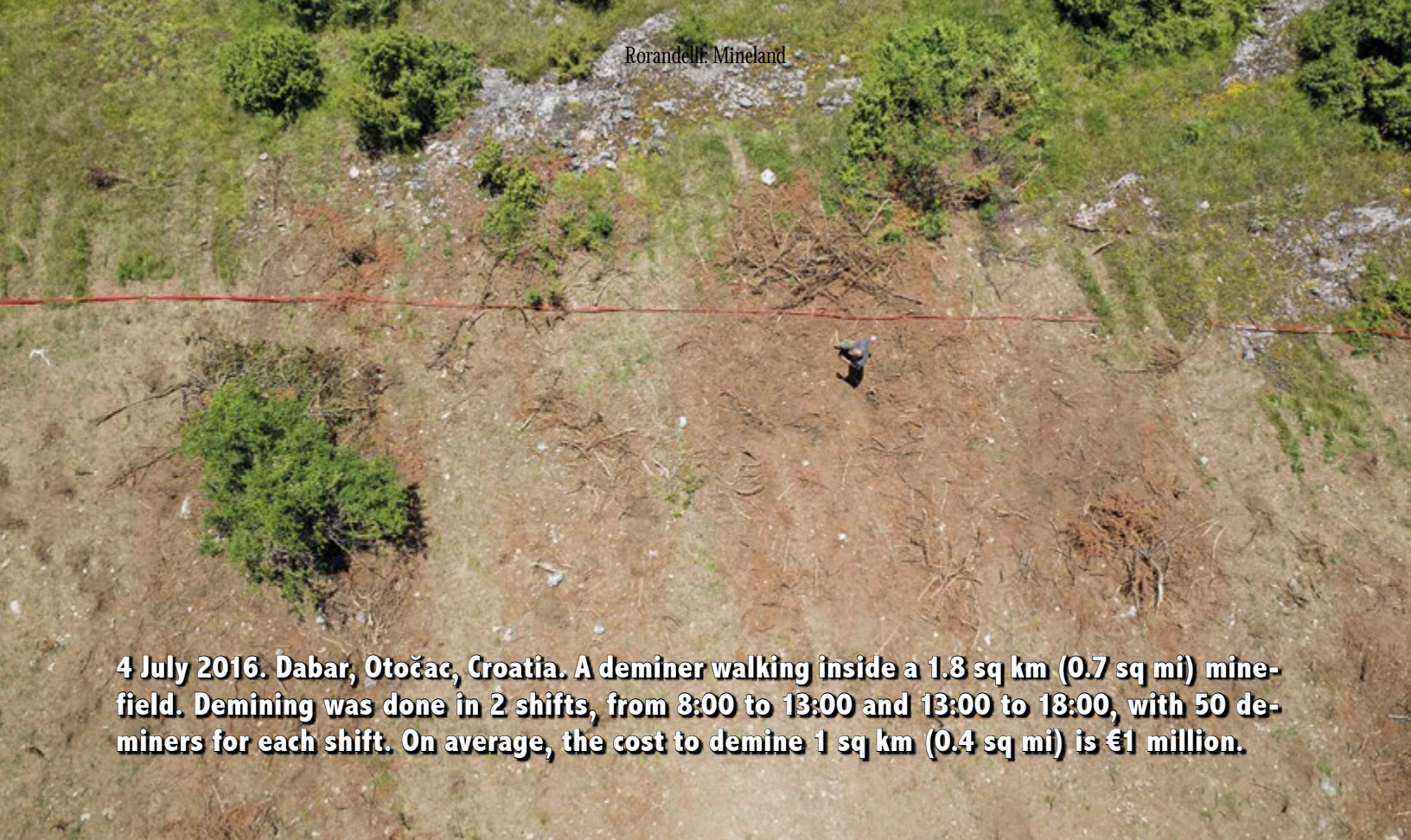
**1 July 2016. Dobož, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The fertile agricultural area of Dobož is the most heavily mined in the country. Here, a deminer working for The HALO Trust is probing the ground along the borders for landmines. The area has already been cleared by a demining machine; however, clearance does not guarantee areas to be 100 percent mine-free, especially along borders.**



**22 April 2017. Vitez, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Anita Vidovic, 26 years-old, works for Caritas Bosnia in Sarajevo as a kindergarten teacher. She lost her right leg in Dubravica on 1 April 2001. She was walking with her family along a path near her home, last in line, when she stepped on a mine. In the explosion, she lost her leg, and her cousin and aunt were injured. With her disability, she receives payments of about €90 per month. "I think in BiH people don't talk enough about this problem, which seems to be hidden under a carpet."**





An aerial photograph showing a deminer walking through a cleared area of a minefield. The ground is brown and uneven, with some sparse green vegetation. A red line, likely a boundary or path, runs horizontally across the middle of the image. The deminer is a small figure in the center-right of the frame.

**4 July 2016. Dabar, Otočac, Croatia. A deminer walking inside a 1.8 sq km (0.7 sq mi) minefield. Demining was done in 2 shifts, from 8:00 to 13:00 and 13:00 to 18:00, with 50 deminers for each shift. On average, the cost to demine 1 sq km (0.4 sq mi) is €1 million.**

An aerial photograph showing a controlled explosion in a dense forest. A large, billowing cloud of white smoke and dust rises from the ground, partially obscuring the trees below. The forest is lush green, and a dirt path or road is visible on the right side of the image.

**13 April 2016. Zagermlje, Pejë, Kosovo. The controlled explosion of collected landmines in a 42,500 sq m (50,830 sq yd) minefield, discovered in 2015. Deminers have thus far recovered 34 unexploded mines.**



**23 April 2017. Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Nizam Cancar, 42 years-old, has played with the Phantom club sitting-volleyball team since 1996, and won a gold medal at the London Olympic games and a silver medal at the Rio de Janeiro Olympic games. On 6 October 1994, he lost his leg while working as a deminer and receives payments of €220 per month. Exactly 22 years after his accident, on 6 October 2016, his son was born. "Our government has a problem talking about mines."**





**10 July 2016. Kotur, Sisak, Croatia. A mined area inside the village of Kotur.**







**19 April 2016.  
Hoqe e Qytetit,  
Kosovo. A part  
of a deflagrated  
BL-755 cluster  
bomb.**



**20 April 2016.  
Zagermlje,  
Pejë, Kosovo.  
Remains of an  
exploded BLU-  
97 UK-made  
NATO clus-  
ter bomb.**



### **Rocco Rorandelli**

Rocco Rorandelli (Italy, 1973) started working as a documentary photographer after his studies in zoology, which helped him develop a profound interest in global social and environmental issues. His images have been utilized in several awareness campaigns of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and published by the main international magazines, such as *The New York Times*, *Le Monde Magazine*, *GEO*, *Der Spiegel*, *Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Paris Match*, *Guardian Review*, *D di Repubblica*, *L'Espresso*, *Internazionale*, *Io Donna*, *Vanity Fair*, *Monocle*, *IL*, and many others. In 2011, he was awarded a grant by the Fund for Investigative Journalism for his long-term project on the tobacco industry. Rorandelli is based in Rome and is one of the founding members of the collective TerraProject.

**Website:** <http://terraproject.net/photographers/rocco-rorandelli>